



CLEMSON<sup>®</sup> INTRAMURAL  
SPORTS

# Softball Rules

*Revised September 2023*



*Department of*

**CAMPUS RECREATION**

*Division of Student Affairs*

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## 1. Players and Equipment

- 1.1. Each team will consist of ten players. CoRec teams will play with 5 men and 5 women. A minimum of nine players must be present at game time to begin (CoRec: 4 men and 5 women, or 5 men and 4 women).
- 1.2. Each team is advised to bring their own gloves; however, gloves will be available for checkout. **All participants must use bats and game balls provided by Sport Programs.** Batting and catching helmets are not required, however, will be available upon request.
- 1.3. Teams are required to wear matching-colored shirts that include individual numbers on the back. Teams will wear the color selected on IMLeagues during registration.
- 1.4. All players must wear shoes. Tennis/running shoes, as well as plastic cleats are acceptable. Player will not be permitted to wear metal cleats, sandals, or play barefoot.
- 1.5. Players may wear baseball-style caps. Knit and stocking caps are permitted. Players may wear a headband no wider than two inches and made of non-abrasive cloth, elastic, fiber, soft leather or rubber. Bandanas and other headgear with knots are prohibited. Rubber or cloth elastic bands may be used to control hair.
- 1.6. No jewelry or any other item deemed dangerous by the Intramural Staff may be worn. Any player wearing exposed permanent jewelry (e.g., body piercings) will not be permitted to play.

## 2. Game Factors and Timing

- 2.1. Each game will consist of either 7 innings, or 50 minutes (whichever occurs first). No new inning will begin once the 50-minute time limit has expired; however, any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed.
- 2.2. Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 20 runs or more after 4 complete innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead), or 15 runs after 5 innings (4 ½ if home team is ahead), the officials may end the game.
- 2.3. Extra Innings (Overtime): If the score remains tied at the end of regulation play, extra innings will be played. To begin each extra innings, the team at-bat will begin with a runner on second base. This runner will be the person who completed the last at-bat in the previous inning. Innings will be played until there is a winner.
- 2.4. Substitution: A substitute may enter the game in place of a starter. The substitute will bat in the same spot in the lineup as did the starter he/she is replacing. All starters are eligible to return back in the game, in their same spot in the lineup. **There will be no courtesy pinch runners at any time.**
- 2.5. Playing Field: The playing field is enclosed by a fence. Any ball that is overthrown, from any position on the field, and goes over the fence, is declared a dead ball and results in the runner(s) being allowed to advance one base beyond the base the runner occupied at the point of the throw. A runner is considered to occupy a base when they reach and tag the given base

### 3. Rules of Play

- 3.1. Each batter will assume a 1 ball/1 strike count at the start of every at bat. The batter will walk when the count has a total of four balls. The batter will strike out after three strikes. If a batter has two strikes, and hits a foul ball, then the batter will be allowed to have one more (courtesy foul). A strike or another foul ball after the courtesy foul will result in the batter being declared out.
- 3.2. Pitching: the pitcher shall keep one foot in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball is released. After assuming the pitching positions, the pitcher must present the ball in front of their body for at least one second before starting the delivery motion.
- 3.3. The pitch must be thrown underhand, and the ball must follow an arc motion through the air. The ball should stay within 6 to 12 feet within the air at the highest point in the arc. This is an Umpire's judgment call. Any pitch that does not meet these requirements will be ruled a ball. Note: it will be at the hitter's discretion whether to swing at a pitch. Pitches that are swung at, and/or hit, will not be subject to this rule.
- 3.4. Strike zone: is defined as a legally pitched ball that crosses the plate between the front shoulder and the back knee of the batter (if the batter is standing parallel with home plate). A batter moving up or back in the batter's box will not alter the location of the strike zone. Any pitch that makes direct contact with home plate will be ruled a ball.
- 3.5. Bunting, chopping the ball downward, stealing, and leading off the base are not permitted
- 3.6. A Runner will be declared out when:
  - a. Any pitch that makes direct contact with home plate will be ruled a ball.
  - b. Touched by a fielder who has possession of the ball, when not on a base
  - c. In a force-out situation, the fielder contacts the base before the runner reaches it.
  - d. Passing another runner that has not already been called out.
  - e. Leaving a base before a fly ball has been touched by a fielder, or dopped to the ground, provided the play is properly appealed by the defense
  - f. Interfering with a defensive player's effort to field a ball or attain proper position
  - g. Struck by a fair, untouched, batted ball, if not on a base.
  - h. Intentionally crashing into a fielder, or intentionally failing to avoid being hit with a thrown ball
  - i. Leaving a base before a pitch is hit
  - j. Sliding headfirst, or cleats-up into a base.
- 3.7. A runner will not be declared out when:
  - a. A defensive obstruction occurs
    - Example: A base runner's path is impeded by a defensive player who is not actively fielding the ball
  - b. Sliding into a base safely and dislodging the base from its proper position.
  - c. The runner runs through first base (tags it) and then turns into foul territory to maintain position on the base

#### 4. Batting Order

- 4.1. Each team's batting order must be given to the Intramural Sports staff member at the game.
- 4.2. If a team is found to be batting out of order:
  - a. While the incorrect player is still batting, the correct player must replace the incorrect player at bat and will continue with the current ball/strike count.
  - b. After the incorrect player has batted, and before the next pitch is thrown: the batter will be declared out, and any advancing base runners must return
  - c. After the incorrect player has batted, and after the next pitch is thrown: the at-bat stands
- 4.3. Any team who begins the game with 9 players may add the 10<sup>th</sup> player at the bottom of the lineup, regardless of when the player shows up and signs in to play
- 4.4. An 11<sup>th</sup> batter (extra hitter) may be used in Men's and Women's play. This person **MUST** be present at the beginning of the game. Extra hitters cannot be added once the game has begun.

#### 5. Batting Order + Fielding (CoRec)

- 5.1. Teams must alternate men and women in the batting order. If a team bats 9 players, an out will be recorded in the lineup where two men or women are batting consecutively
- 5.2. CoRec teams may use extra batters but must have one man and one woman (12 batters in their lineup). CoRec teams may not bat with 11 hitters in their lineup.
- 5.3. Position requirements are as follows
  - a. The pitcher and catcher must be opposite genders
  - b. The infield and outfield must each have two men and two women